

**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
FINAL POLLUTION REPORT**

Date: June 28, 2004

From: Benjamin Franco, OSC
US EPA Region IV

To: Shane Hitchcock, Branch Chief ERRB
Regional Response Center, 4WD-ERRB
Gary Andrew, GAEPD

I. GENERAL SITE INFORMATION

Site Name: Bio-Labs Chemical Fire.
Street Address: 1700 Old Covington Hwy.
City, County, State, Zip code: Conyers, Rockdale County, Georgia
Latitude and longitude: N 33° 39' 27" W 84° 0' 33"
Site Id: A4EY
State Notification: GA EPD
Incident Category: CERCLA Emergency Response
Start Date: May 25, 2004
Demobilization Date: May 26, 2004
Responding FOSCs: Ben Franco/Rick Jardine

II BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 5/25/04 a fire broke out at the Bio-Labs, Inc., Chemical Company warehouse at approximately 0415 hours (NRC report # 722896). The warehouse contained approximately 12.5 million pounds of pool chemicals and oxidizers. The Rockdale County EMA director evacuated businesses nearby and ordered voluntary evacuations in a 1.5 mile area bounded by Sigma Rd and Hwy 138. Close to 500 people were evacuated and sought shelter at House Elementary and Heritage High School.

III. RESPONSE INFORMATION

Air Monitoring

During the period of 25MAY04 through 26MAY04 EPA conducted air monitoring using single point monitors, a chlorine and hydrogen cyanide monitor. EPA monitored for Hydrogen Bromide, Chlorine, Phosgene, Hydrogen Chloride, and

Hydrogen Cyanide. A representative for the Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) recommended action levels for HBR, HCL, and Chlorine at 3.0 ppm and the Phosgene levels were for 1 ppm.

25MAY04

Two air monitoring teams were formed and they were led by OSC Jardine and was comprised of EPA contractors. One team went along I-20 and monitored for the above mentioned chemicals. They concentrated their efforts in the I-20 area that was closed by DOT and the immediate area near the facility. The sampling team found no levels of the chemicals being monitored on I-20, especially near exit 93. The air monitoring data was presented to DOT and the interstate was opened at 1500hrs. Police officers were staged nearby in case the plume shifted and required the immediate closing of the interstate.

A second team concentrated their efforts in the immediate area of the facility and along areas that were evacuated. The highest values found were:

Sample Time	Date	Address	Chemical (ppm)
1410	05/25/04	VFW Driving towards 3 rd Ave by VFW Lake	Cl: 1.48
1421	05/25/04	Olympic culdesac	HBR: 1.2 Cl: .17
1422	05/25/04	Blacklawn Rd behind BioLab	HBR: 9.0 Cl: 1.5
1428	05/25/04	Blacklawn Rd behind BioLab	HBR: 5.4 Cl: 1.5
1646	05/25/04	Rockdale Ind. Blvd	HBR: 4.1
1647	05/25/04	Rockdale Ind. Blvd.	HBR: 9
1747	05/25/04	Lester Rd	HBR: 9

These areas had already been evacuated and police officers were restricting access to it.

EPA's ASPECT aircraft was dispatched and commenced monitoring around 1400 hrs. Their equipment did not identify elevated of chlorine or HCL in the plume. This could be because the equipment may not be sensitive enough to detect very low levels.

On the evening of 25MAY04, EPA dispatched members of the US Coast Guard Gulf Strike Team to the Rockdale Hospital and performed air monitoring through the night. The Hospital requested this through the Rockdale County EMA director. There was a concern that the change of atmospheric conditions (slower wind speeds and lower temperatures) may cause the plume to stay close to the ground during the night.

Fire Fighting Operations

The environmental contractor for Biolab, Hulcher, rented excavators and knocked down one of the warehouse's walls. This allowed fire fighting personnel to flood the area with huge amounts of water.

26MAY04

EPA continued air monitoring operation through the night and concentrated our efforts in the outer areas of the evacuation. At 0500 hrs, OSC Spurlin met with the County EMA director Jeff Wigginton and presented our air monitoring results. The County EMA director decided to lift the evacuations for nearby residents. Businesses near the BioLab facility were maintained closed. During the afternoon of the 26MAY04, EPA and an environmental contractor for BioLab continued monitoring the air in the area adjacent to the site. Detectable chlorine levels were found by EPA on the BioLab fence line and at several businesses nearby (Diversitec and Viasys). Those levels, .28 ppm, were below the chlorine evacuation action levels of 3 ppm. At this point EPA recommended that the evacuation can be lifted for the rest of the businesses in the area with the following conditions: Biolab will monitor the air inside buildings before employees can enter them and Biolab will continue to perform perimeter monitoring on the fence line and warn businesses in the area if air levels are above EPA action levels. By 1800 hrs, the emergency response had finished and it turned to a recovery effort. The Fire Department was basically looking for hot spot and flooding them with water.

Water Runoff

The environmental contractor for BioLab tried to control the run off by recovering the runoff using pumps and putting it in frac tanks. Close to 25 million gallons of water was spent fighting the fire. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division took the lead investigating water runoff problems. Unfortunately, runoff control could not avoid impacting the VFW Lake and a sizeable fish kill was found on 27MAY04. GAEPD investigated the impacts of the runoff on the lake and is working closely with BioLab on its restoration.

Planned Removal Actions

The State will take the lead on overseeing the clean up actions at the BioLab facility and water run off areas.

Next Steps

EPA is in the process of preparing a final report that will include all the air monitoring data. This should be done in the next month.

IV. CONTRACTOR INFORMATION AND ESTIMATED COSTS

A. Contractor Information

CONTRACTOR	DO NUMBER	POP START	POP END	DO AMOUNT
START		25MAY04		\$25,000
USCG GST		25MAY04	27MAY04	\$25,000
TOTAL: \$50,000				

B. Estimated Costs

Extramural:

START: \$25,000

USCGGST: \$25,000

Total Estimated Extramural Costs: \$50,000

Intramural:

EPA Direct Costs: \$5,000

EPA Indirect Costs

TOTAL SITE COSTS: \$55,000

These figures should not be used to support or dispute any legal action regarding this removal.

V. DISPOSITION OF WASTES

Collected water runoff from the firefighting operation will be disposed by BioLab.

VI. ROSTER OF AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS ASSISTING IN REMOVAL

Org./Agency, Address	Primary Contact	Phone Number	Role/Activity
USEPA R4	Benjamin Franco	404-562-8758	OSC
	Rick Jardine	404-562-8764	OSC
GAEPD	Gary Andrew	404-656-6907	Manager

VII. LESSONS LEARNED: None